

A FIRST LOOK AT LONDON DESIGN FESTIVAL 2026

12-20 SEPTEMBER 2026

londondesignfestival.com

#LDF26



Above: Framing LDF 2026, Courtesy Pentagram & London Design Festival

1st July | Today, at the Isla Terrace at The Standard, [London Design Festival](https://londondesignfestival.com) announced its 24th edition, taking place from the **12 - 20 September 2026**. The event is a defining moment for UK design, and a cornerstone of the global cultural calendar. Across the city, the event will showcase Landmark Installations, Special Projects, the Global Design Forum, the London Design Medals, Fairs and a Partner Programme across eleven Design Districts. London Design Festival continues to champion both emerging and established talent, fostering collaboration and innovation across the international design community.

London Design Festival 2026 is defined by a strong convergence of global exchange, craft revival and future facing technologies, with many projects exploring how cultural heritage, material innovation and digital thinking can coexist. Across installations and exhibitions from *The Pangolin Shield's* reflection on colonial legacies and movement, to cross cultural craft projects spanning China, Japan and the UK amongst others, and immersive visions of AI-driven and technologically mediated futures; a key theme is the recontextualisation of tradition within contemporary global narratives. This year places an emphasis on dialogue - between East and West, past and future, human and non-human, physical and digital. This dialogue often foregrounds sustainability, circularity and reflection; positioning London not just as a showcase of design innovation but a platform for critical global conversations.

The Festival is proud to announce the **Mayor of London** as Principal Supporter for 2026. This London Design Festival continues to be supported by **Bloomberg Philanthropies**, with **Bloomberg Connects** serving as the Festival's official digital guide. The free digital guide will feature content exclusive to Connects, including expert commentary, video highlights and curated routes across the city.

"London Design Festival 2026 is proving to be an exceptional year with a vibrant array of international installations and projects, new design districts, and an expanding Global Design Forum following the success of Global Design Forum Istanbul in May. London retains its allure as a global design capital engaging with expanding audiences, partners across the economy, and a high profile made by the layers of design stories that the Festival is home to." - **Ben Evans CBE, London Design Festival Director and Co-Founder**

The Festival's diverse programming will showcase key installations across the city, in cultural hubs such as the Barbican, the V&A, the Strand, Somerset House and Wapping. Internationally acclaimed designers are invited to create ambitious works of art in some of London's most iconic public spaces, showcasing design's ability to inspire, provoke and connect audiences.

LANDMARK PROJECT

The Pangolin Shield by Studio Saar and Atelier One, supported by Secure

The Pangolin Shield is the first Landmark Project to be announced by LDF. The pavilion in the heart of the city encourages visitors to reflect and examine the relationship between context, innovation and craft. The work explores colonial legacies, power, ecological exploitation, and the movement of people and beings across borders. Embodying the dualities of vulnerability and protection, East and West, displacement and acceptance, *The Pangolin Shield* by **Studio Saar** and **Atelier One**, supported by **Secure**, will be located on the **Strand** during the London Design Festival. The installation is inspired by the pangolin, the world's most trafficked mammal and whose scales cover their bodies from head to tail.

Studio Saar's multidisciplinary team of architects, makers, researchers and communicators works across different cultural contexts, in the UK and India, with the same vision - to craft places and spaces that uplift those in and around them. 'Saar' means 'essence' in Sanskrit and exploring the soul of a brief, a place and its people is fundamental to the practice's approach. Ananya Singhal is the Founder and Managing Partner at Studio Saar and with over 20 years' experience in the industry.

The pavilion is developed in collaboration with structural engineers **Atelier One**, one of the most innovative engineering practices in the UK, led by Founder and Director Neil Thomas

MBE. Atelier One has played a critical role in advancing bamboo technology, transforming it from a traditional material into a highly precise, low-carbon structural solution. The practice has gained international acclaim for its projects, which include The Arc, Green School, Bali, which won the Supreme Award for Structural Engineering Excellence, Gardens by the Bay with Grant Associates & Wilkinson Eyre, London 2012 & Sochi 2014 Olympics Opening Ceremonies, Cloud Gate with Anish Kapoor and 'The Claw' Stage for U2's 360 Degree World Tour, with Mark Fisher.

The Pangolin Shield consists of a bamboo grid shell covered with traditional Indian police shields made from lathis, and woven rain shields or 'knups' traditionally used by farmers in north-eastern India. Layered atop the structure like scales, the various shields are reassembled as a protective canopy, playing with light and shade whilst providing collective shelter. By removing the police shields from their context of confrontation and state authority and bringing them in a functional symbiosis with the knups, the installation aims to disarm emblems of aggression to encourage rest and dialogue, empathy and community. Located on a pedestrianised street behind the Indian High Commission in the West End, close to the bust of Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, the installation encourages reflection on colonial legacies, power, ecological exploitation, and the movement of people and beings across borders.



Above: Presentation Drawing of *The Pangolin Shield* by Studio Saar and Atelier One, supported by Secure

SPECIAL PROJECTS

MADE x Barbican

MADE will be unveiling a collaboration with the **Barbican**, launching an interiors collection that brings one of Britain's most iconic architectural estates into the heart of the contemporary home. To celebrate, they have created an immersive installation in the iconic institution for the London Design Festival, one which delves into the archives of Barbican interiors and the design inspiration behind the *MADE x Barbican* collection.

Rooted in design history, yet focused on modern living, the *MADE x Barbican* collection reinterprets the interiors and features of the Barbican Estate for today's lifestyles. Drawing on archival research, original layouts and the pioneering work of designer Miriam Howitt, the 23-piece collection transforms architectural references into a range of furniture, lighting, textiles and accessories. The *MADE x Barbican* collection will be available to shop at [MADE.COM](https://www.made.com) from August 2026.



Above: the *MADE x Barbican* collection. Photographer credit: Felix Speller

Reviving Craft: Reflection of the Mind, by Sun Media Group

Sun Media Group will present *Reviving Craft: Reflection of the Mind*, an exhibition bringing together local and international artisans and designers to explore new possibilities for traditional craftsmanship within contemporary lifestyles and a global context. The exhibition has been curated by **Su Dan**, Deputy Director of the Chinese Traditional Culture Museum (CTCM), Professor at the Academy of Arts & Design, Tsinghua University, and **Yang Lan**, Chairperson of Sun Media Group.

Over the course of three years, they have held exhibitions globally; the first exhibition, held in 2024 took place at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, France, focusing on the relationship between humans and nature. The second edition, hosted at Palazzo Serbelloni in Milan last year, focused on humanity and society. For this year's Festival, Sun Media Group will bring the exhibition to Somerset House. Centred on the relationship between humans and the self with the theme *Reflection of the Mind*, the exhibition is divided into three sections: *Clear the Mind*, *Nourish the Mind*, and *Refine the Mind*. They have invited more than 60 artisans and designers from China and abroad to showcase their works this year, celebrating craftsmanship on a global stage. The exhibition will examine one's relationship to objects and the journey they can take us on, inviting visitors to rediscover the wisdom and beauty of traditional Chinese crafts.

The co-curators are both experts in the fields of culture and design. Yang Lan is a household name in China, as a leading broadcast journalist and media entrepreneur, previously hosting CCTV's "Zhengda Variety Show" and creating her signature show "Yang Lan One on One", including her leadership role at Sun Media Group. The group is highly regarded in the industry for its high-quality content and promoting women's empowerment. It has played a significant role in facilitating cultural exchanges between China and the world and in promoting sustainable development. While Su Dan is a renowned designer, art curator, critic and writer, and a recipient of the Order of the Star of Italy. He currently holds the post of Deputy Director of Chinese Traditional Culture Museum (CTCM).

Some highlights include participation from **Rosalie Huang**, a fashion artist and editorial consultant for *Vogue China*, the promotion of environmental sustainability and up-cycled materials in the work of eco-art creator **Huang Lu**, and traditional techniques being spotlighted, such as a unique practice pioneered by **Li Xiaofeng** using ancient ceramic shards and **Ma Yixi** who integrates intangible cultural heritage with architectural culture. Pictured below is the work of fiber artist **Shuang Xi**, her practice explores the imprints time embeds within materials. She integrates natural raw materials into fiber art at a profound level, employing contemporary craft to render the organic textures and marks borne by the earth. Through slow, deliberate manual labour, her work documents the cycles and transformations inherent to nature.



Above: *Soft Monolith* by Shuang Xi, part of *Reviving Craft: Reflection of the Mind*, by Sun Media Group

Craft x Tech Tokai Project

Craft x Tech will return to the London Design Festival this September for its second edition. Founded by designer and engineer **Dr Hideki Yoshimoto** of design studio Tangent, with curatorial direction by Italian independent curator **Maria Cristina Didero**, Craft x Tech pairs international designers and artists with local Japanese craftspeople from the Tokai region to produce new creative works. The project explores how Japanese craft, specialising in lacquer, metal, woodworking, ceramics, washi paper and textiles, can be reimagined through a thoughtful dialogue between traditional techniques and contemporary practices. *Craft x Tech Tokai Project* reinterprets the regions' centuries-old traditions to create a collection of contemporary works that celebrate the enduring relevance of traditional craftsmanship.

The *Craft x Tech Tokai Project* brings together creatives from six artisan regions, with each artisan collaborating with internationally acclaimed designers. Together, they explore new creative possibilities, resulting in innovative art pieces that aim to redefine the future of traditional crafts.



Above: Group image of the creatives involved in the Craft x Tech Tokai Project.
Photo credit: Noritoshi Kuroki

Craft x Tech Tokai Project collaborations to be showcased include: *Fushi*, a console and lighting piece created by **Yohei Ito** and Australian industrial designer **David Caon**. Ito is the third-generation head of Fudogama kiln, which upholds and revitalises the traditions of Mino Yaki ceramic ware while creating products that seamlessly fit into modern lifestyles, while Caon is known for designing the award-winning Boeing 787-9 interiors and most recently Airbus Project Sunrise for QANTAS. *Grid Unwoven* sees Founder of Warabi Paper Company, **Takanori Senda**, collaborate with design studio **Lanzavecchia + Wai**, founded by **Francesca Lanzavecchia** and **Hunn Wai**. *Kataginu* brings **Hiroyuki Murase**, CEO of Suzusan Co., Ltd. and Creative Director of suzusan, with acclaimed British designer **Bethan Laura Wood**, who is known for material investigation, a layered aesthetic, and vibrant colour. *Kasane* is the work of **Shigeyuki Ando**, President of the long-established company founded in 1880, Ando Cloisonne Co, Ltd, with British-Canadian designer **Philippe Malouin**, known for diverse work including sofas, tables and installations, and with clients including Flos, Iittala and SCP. The Japanese contemporary artist **Eugene Kangawa** worked with **Mayuki Kato**, the fourth-generation Head of Shingama, a kiln specialising in Seto Sometsuke Yaki, for the *Chair in Japanese Nuki and Dami style, The Everyday at the Atelier*. South African designer **Atang Tshikare**'s pairing with artisan **Tomoyuki Matsuda** has resulted in *Yamollo*. Matsuda is the CEO of Itogo, which specialises in machine-braided Iga Kumihimo, a

traditional Japanese braided cords and one of Japan's nationally designated traditional craft products.

MixZ: China White Reimagined at the V&A and Future Living with Shenzhen Style™ at the Old Selfridges Hotel

MixZ is an international cultural platform connecting Asia and the UK through design, creativity and innovation. It will be brought to life through the upcoming MixZ Culture and Brand Innovation Center, a landmark, half-million-square-foot cultural destination in London. MixZ brings together and collaborates with leading creative talents, cultural institutions and brands, to showcase its MixZ Methodology and how cultural heritage, immersive experiences, collaboration and AI can elevate creative possibilities and future living.

For London Design Festival 2026, MixZ will present an exhibition at the V&A celebrating and reimagining Dehua porcelain's heritage, which for centuries has been one of China's most significant artistic and cultural exports. Bringing together leading designers and artists from China and around the world, MixZ will present a new generation of Dehua porcelain works that reinterpret this extraordinary material through contemporary design.

MixZ will also present an immersive exploration of *Future Living with Shenzhen Style™* at the Old Selfridges Hotel, a visionary environment where design, technology and culture converge. Visitors will journey through a series of cinematic spaces that imagine how we may live, work and connect in the decades ahead. Bringing together China's leading design, technology and consumer brands, the installation will showcase pioneering products through immersive spatial storytelling, large-scale installations and interactive experiences. The installation will offer UK audiences a rare opportunity to discover many of China's most innovative brands and creative businesses, several of which will be making their UK debut, highlighting Shenzhen's position as one of the world's leading centres for design, technology and innovation. More details will be announced soon.

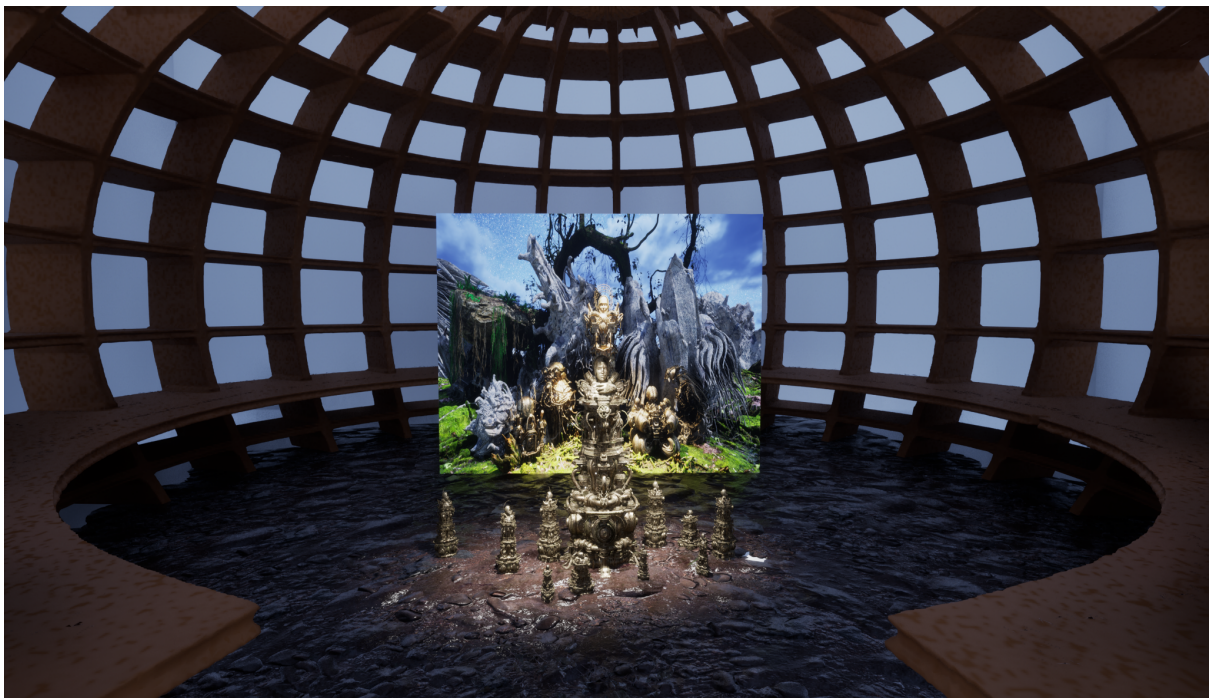
L-Acoustics at the Wapping Hydraulic Power Station

London Design Festival is pleased to announce that they will collaborate with the pioneering professional audio brand L-Acoustics to present an immersive sound experience at the Wapping Hydraulic Power Station. Originally built in 1890, Wapping Power Station once powered much of Victorian London. This historic space will open to the public for the first time in 13 years, offering a rare opportunity to explore one of the city's most remarkable industrial spaces. More details will be announced soon.

V&A x LDF26: AWAKENINGS

The Festival's long standing partner, the **V&A**, continues to play a central role with a curated programme of global installations. This year's edition is co-curated by **Carrie Chan** and **Kristian Volsing**, and celebrates *Awakenings* - a vibrant exploration of how design, craft and technology can inspire new perspectives, spark curiosity and bring to light invisible yet interconnected forces. This year's programme maps a journey of awakenings across the museum's iconic galleries, provoking new consciousness around the creative and destructive potential of AI, opening our minds to the non-human world, tapping into the joyful energy of music and sound, and exploring our embodiment of identity through subversive, sculptural furniture.

Bringing together an exciting lineup of global talent, the programme features work from **Henry Svendsen**, **Sam Ghantous**, **Andre Williams**, **Nina Davies** and **Albert Yonathan Setyawan**, alongside major new commissions from **Aziza Kadyri**, **Eunjo Lee** and V&A Emerging Designer 2026, **Playfool**. Together, these installations and interventions aim to awaken us from the everyday world and confront the forces shaping our collective future.



Above: Digital Molting by Eunjo Lee, in partnership with Globe Earth Studio,
V&A x LDF26: Awakenings

THE DESIGN MUSEUM

During LDF, the **Design Museum**'s programme will include *NIGO: From Japan with Love*, the world's first retrospective on **NIGO**, KENZO's Artistic Director, credited as one of the first designers to bridge the worlds of streetwear and luxury fashion. The Design Museum also continues its annual PLATFORM series with a free to visit display showcasing works by designer and artist **Simone Brewster**, exhibiting objects spanning architecture, furniture, jewellery, collectible design and unveiling brand-new works. The curator, **Hadeel Eltayeb**, will be hosting a guided tour of the display on Saturday 12 September. In addition, **Simone Brewster** will join **Laxmi Hussein**, **Emefa Cole**, and **Hettie Judah** in a conversation chaired by the Design Museum curator **Danielle Thom** on *Design Practice and Motherhood* at the museum on 15 September, reflecting on how motherhood shapes, challenges and enriches artistic and design work today.



Above: *Negress Chaise Lounge* by Simone Brewster, part of the Design Museum's PLATFORM series.
Photo credit: Charles Emerson

GLOBAL DESIGN FORUM

The [Global Design Forum](#) (GDF) is a curated thought leadership programme, celebrating design and the minds shaping its future. Following the successful launch of the Global Design Forum Istanbul earlier this year in May, in collaboration with People Places Ideas, the forum will be returning to the V&A South Kensington for LDF. Across three days at the V&A, from 12-14 September, design will be inspected, explored and unpacked through the words and works of diverse practitioners in design and beyond.

This year, the Global Design Forum is excited to be partnering with two esteemed Programme Partners: **Sun Media Group** and **Bowmore**. Sun Media Group is one of China's leading private media companies, distinguished for high-quality content and integrated marketing capabilities across media, education and location-based entertainment. The company is a pioneer in AI-powered platforms for music, art and design, leads in women's empowerment education, and champions the cultural exchanges between China and the world.

The premium whisky brand Bowmore is bringing together perspectives from the worlds of whisky, architecture, art and design to the Forum, through panel discussions and whisky tastings. As Day Sponsor of the Global Design Forum and host of a dedicated panel discussion, Bowmore will explore the parallels between whisky-making and creative disciplines. Both are shaped by decisions made over years, and often generations, resulting in enduring works that continue to resonate long after they are created. Attendees of the Global Design Forum will have the opportunity to experience Bowmore through an exclusive tasting that brings the character of Islay to the programme.

DESIGN DISTRICTS

London Design Festival will take place across 11 Design Districts that highlight creative clusters spanning London. This year's edition sees the reveal of a new district in the heart of the city and the evolution of the Shoreditch design offerings. The eleven districts for the 2026 Festival are: **Bankside**, **Brompton**, **Chelsea**, **Dalston to Stoke Newington**, **EC1**, **Fleet Street Quarter**, **Mayfair**, **Park Royal**, **Shoreditch Design Week**, **Blackhorse Creates** formerly known as William Morris Design Line and the new edition of a **Soho** district.

SHOREDITCH DESIGN WEEK

Shoreditch Design Week (SDW), London Design Festival's largest dedicated district, is taking place from 15–20 September 2026 with four main exhibition venues running the first three days (15–17 September) providing platforms to emerging designers, new materials, neurodivergent design and the latest interior innovations internationally. Evolving from the long-established Shoreditch Design Triangle, SDW marks a new chapter for the district with

an ambitious and wide-ranging programme. SDW will unite leading brands and studios alongside emerging designers across more than 60 showrooms, galleries and creative spaces. Through a programme of curated exhibitions, installations, showroom activations, talks, tours and workshops, the district will host hundreds of events throughout the week.

LONDON DESIGN MEDALS

The annual [London Design Medals](#) will recognise the contribution made by leading design figures and emerging talent to London and the industry, with four London Design Medals awarded each year; *The London Design Medal*, *Lifetime Achievement Medal*, *Emerging Design Medal* and the *Design Innovation Medal*. The winners will be revealed in early September and the medals will be awarded at the Medal Dinner on 14 September.

PITH x LDF LAUNCH PAD

For this year's edition, **Pith®** are supporting the Festival's Launch Pad initiative by sponsoring five emerging designers to participate. The Launch Pad initiative champions inclusivity by actively elevating underrepresented talent and helping creatives who normally wouldn't have the resources to join LDF's standard partnership program. Selected participants secure a physical or digital platform to present their innovations and build industry networks. As well as editorial features highlighting their practice shared across LDF and Pith® media channels. The five spaces for the *Pith® x Launch Pad* Initiative will be occupied by emerging designers focused on responsible design, circularity and material innovation. Entrants must first register for an LDF Launch Pad place by 31 July 2026, with successful participants announced in August.

LDF26 GRAPHIC IDENTITY BY PENTAGRAM

Continuing a creative partnership spanning more than two decades, **Pentagram** has developed a new graphic campaign for London Design Festival 2026 – built around the theme [Framing LDF](#). This year's identity explores the Festival as a framework that amplifies hundreds of creative voices across London. For 2026, Pentagram looked towards the supportive role the Festival plays within the city itself, with the visual identity putting creatives' work at the forefront of the campaign; from providing a platform for emerging creatives in their early careers, to providing established practices and designers with opportunities to showcase new ideas and ambitious projects.

Across exhibitions, installations, institutions and Design Districts, London Design Festival acts as a stage for design stories to unfold. The annual event plays a key role in championing the UK's design industry, bolstering London's position as a global destination for business, culture and tourism, and contributing to the UK's reputation as a creative powerhouse. As one of the world's leading design events, the festival has also served as the

blueprint for design weeks and festivals globally and continues to be a key moment on the cultural calendar.

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Notes to Editor:

For further information, please contact ldf@bacchus.agency | [Bacchus](#)

For all images and assets, please download [here](#)

About London Design Festival | <https://londondesignfestival.com/>

Established in 2003 by Sir John Sorrell CBE and Ben Evans CBE, London Design Festival celebrates and promotes London as the design capital of the world. London Design Festival has since earned the reputation as a key calendar moment of London's autumn creative season, alongside London Fashion Week, Frieze Art Fair and the London Film Festival, attracting the greatest thinkers, practitioners, retailers and educators to the capital, in a citywide celebration.

About Global Design Forum | <https://londondesignfestival.com/gdf>

Global Design Forum is a curated thought leadership programme, celebrating design and the minds shaping its future. Across three days design will be inspected, explored and unpacked through the words and works of diverse practitioners in design and beyond. Earlier this year, the Global Design Forum Istanbul 2026, a new international platform for design, launched in collaboration with People Places Ideas, took place 13–16 May 2026. New global locations to be announced for next year's edition.

About Bloomberg Philanthropies | <https://www.bloomberg.org/>

Bloomberg Philanthropies invests in 700 cities and 150 countries around the world to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on creating lasting change in five key areas: the Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation, and Public Health. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg's giving, including his foundation, corporate, and personal philanthropy as well as Bloomberg Associates, a philanthropic consultancy that advises cities around the world. For more information, please visit [bloomberg.org](https://www.bloomberg.org/), sign up for our [newsletter](#), or follow us on [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#), [Threads](#), [Facebook](#), and [X](#).

About Bloomberg Connects | <https://www.bloombergconnects.org/>

Bloomberg Connects is a free digital platform featuring more than 1,500 cultural organisations around the world, making it easy to access and engage with arts and culture anytime and anywhere. The app is part of Bloomberg Philanthropies' longstanding commitment to supporting digital innovation in the arts. Participating organisations include botanical gardens, historic houses, outdoor sculpture parks, and world-class museums. The

app is available in more than 50 languages through Google Translate, helping cultural institutions connect with audiences around the world.

About The Standard, London | www.standardhotels.com/london

Housed in the former Camden Town Hall Annex in London's thriving King's Cross neighbourhood, the 1974 Brutalist building has been meticulously restored and sets the perfect stage for The Standard's first hotel outside the United States. The Standard, London has 266 rooms, ranging from Standard King Interior Rooms to terraced suites with outdoor bathtubs overlooking the dramatic St Pancras Station.

On the ground floor, Double Standard, a street-facing bar and restaurant, serves a legendary selection of American diner and British pub favourites. Next door, The Library Lounge features a carefully curated collection that pays homage to the building's original use, alongside Sounds Studio, home to live radio shows and podcasts. Isla offers an approachable seasonal menu, complemented by a brand new wine and cocktail list. The 10th-floor restaurant, Decimo, showcases Chef Paola Arenas' live-fire cooking, surrounded by 360-degree views of London, accessible via the iconic exterior red pill lift.

For seasonal fun, The Rooftop is the perfect summer spot for drinks, bites, and beats.